last point, as it is with builder, cobbler, or any other workman, is important to establish, as it is almost never realized and represents a point from which the skirmish of arguments can legitimately be begun. A certain number of items, such as handkerchiefs, scarves, and stockings, are to be had from the general merchants, and these keep a few manufactured European shirts and ties for the occasional demand of the civil servant. Almost all of the clothing of small children and women is made within the home, either by the housewife herself or by one of several seamstresses who find occasional employment among the houses of wealthier people. A few items of men's clothing are completed in this way, for example, the scarves rolled into men's turbans have a fringe of threads extending about two inches beyond the men of the cloth, and custom requires that these threads be rolled together and sewed to form thicker strands spaced at about an inch apart along the edge of the scarf, a task completed for a small consideration by one of the poorer housewives. In spite of the fact that clothing is relatively inexpensive (a man's woolen jacket of the best quality costs, for both material and tailoring, some three dinars, the approximate equivalent of eight American dollars), economy demands that it be used through a succession of persons in the family until finally worn out, and a great many garments, particularly those of children, have a tattered appearance. Usage, however, demands that at least the children of every house appear at the feast which ends Ramadan, Jayjani Ramazan, in clean, new garments, and

294 437 [443] [292] 294 291 [435] 294 855 796

tailors, seamstresses and mothers are busy during the days preceding the celebration in their preparation, something which resembles our own habit of appearing in new clothing on Easter. 294 955 796

As in the case of seamstresses, a number of women belonging to the poorer households find casual employment as laundresses to those who can afford the expense. There is no specific "wash day," just as there are no fixed periods in the home for changing clothing or linen. A laundress may be called whenever enough soiled clothing warrants her appearance. Almost every larger dwelling contains a tank or tub, usually submerged in the level of the court, for a multiplicity of purposes, among them washing dishes, bathing infants, and laundry. For washing, coarse laundry soap obtained from the general merchants (no domestic soap is made) is used, or water alone. Such laundering involves pounding and wringing on the stones beside the tank, and garments washed too often in this fashion soon show signs of wear. In one's experience, a handerchief, which had withstood perhaps two years of cleansing in the United States, rapidly deteriorated after two trips to the laundress in Rowanduz, and it was similar with other items of apparel. Appreciative of this, laundry is not done by the townspeople with the regularity known in Northern Europe or America. Dry cleaning is unknown, and, to their chagrin, the woolen suits of the officials go into the tank with everything else. One such official, a Baghdadi by origin, possessed a suit with two pairs of trousers, one 296 [352] [415] [388]

known by his trade, as in 'Umar Chaichi, 'Umar the Tea-shop Owner, by a nickname, as in Shakir Mujjrim, Shakir the Criminal, or by his birthplace or region, as in 'Ali Farsi, 'Ali the Persian. Those who claim descent from the tribe of the Prophet may preface their name with sayyid, "Lord," as in Sayyid Ahmad of Batas, and have the right of [292] wearing the green turban. Only the Kurdish nobility use titles such as agha or beg after their names, although the townspeople often apply these to officials and officers of the government elite. The only titles which precede the proper name seem to be Arabic, hajji, a pilgrim, mulla, a priest, sayyid, a descendant of the Hashimite Tribe, and shaykh, an aristocratic or religious chieftain. The titles which follow the proper name are Turkish, agha, beg, effendi, and pasha. These are used in combination. The chief mulla of Rowandux is formally addressed as Mulla 'Abd al-Karim Effendi. No local pattern could be discerned to the aversion of calling a child by his proper name in public, a custom extremely widespread elsewhere in the Middle East, nor did there appear to be any marked attempt to conceal the sex of a male child, for example, dressing him as a girl, to avoid the evil eye.

When able to walk, infants usually join their brothers and sisters in the common bed and accompany them in their play. The older girls are charged with their care, and a child of the wealthy or the aristocracy is rarely left unattended. Those of the lower classes are allowed to wander about the streets of the town, sometimes to their peril.

peril. At the same time, they begin to wear clothing differentiating the sexes, shirts and trousers for the boys, dresses and undertrousers for the girls. The elder children teach them to avoid exposure of the sexual organs in public. Toilet training begins early, at five or six months, by the repetition of a nonsense word which signifies evacuation and is accompanied by the initial use of a pot. Gradually utilization of the latrine and its ewer of water is learned. After two or three years the mother and others of the family begin to punish a child who soils himself. For six months after birth the nails of a baby may not be cut, and the hair of a boy is clipped for the first time at the age of one year. The hair of the girls is stained with henna, and, when it has attained sufficient length, is braided. A girl's ear-lobes are pierced during her early childhood.

An outstanding event for boys between the ages of four and six years is circumcision, which, although not mentioned in the Quran, has come to be an essential attribute of a Muslim. "You are now a Muslim," a father in Rowandum tells a son who has undergone the operation. Generally, one or more persons of wealth who have sons of the appropriate age finance the ceremony for all of the boys in the town who are in need of it. The operation itself is performed by one of the barbers or by a wandering darwish who has made a specialty of such a task. On the appointed day, the boys are gathered in the home of the

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

when, at the age of 6–7, it has learnt in the Koran school the verses of the holy book and is able to take part in the daily religious exercises[68]. On the other hand the home, as I saw it in Southern Kurdistan, had a larger place for the child as a member of the community than is the case with us. Childhood was not a period separated from the adult age, but a preparation for it[69].

Just as the mother or one of the other women in the house found it natural to have the infant in her arms as soon as it was awake during the day, so she found it quite in order to have what we should call the "kindergarten child" at her heels all over the place, in many cases participating in the various daily tasks.

The "child at play" was an unknown phenomenon, and toys were practically non-existent. Compared with our Western education after the introduction of what is sometimes euphonistically called "the century of the child", it seems to me that we often buy our children out of the adult community, stressing the importance of the child's undisturbed playing age by toys, nurseries and so forth. Kurdish society was so arranged as also to include the child. At the various ages the child entered its definite place in the family hierachy. It grew up well-trained in its coming duties, with an assured feeling of its position and what was expected of it. Without any sudden transition it glided into the ranks of the adults.

Both in the case of guests and members of the family, including children, a very polite social convention prevailed, though this did not prevent excitable or noisy conduct. The ideal was a calm and dignified behaviour, and this also meant that one always took one's time. This made social intercourse extremely pleasant and apparently had a calming effect on the children. It may well be that the thoroughly cultivated manner was merely an outer form, but it helped to create a pleasant atmosphere in the homes. All conversation took place in a calm and worthy way with numerous pauses. As Østrup has already pointed out, the Oriental does not, like the European, regard it as good form to chat all the time[70]. The presence of the children was noticed remarkably little, even when there were many, because life in the house and their participation in the daily round provided a natural outlet for their energies. Many of the functions in the house which with us are performed by the water supply, gas, technical aids etc. necessitated with the Kurds human assistance which did not exceed the powers of children. Many of the amenities we consider a matter of course were replaced by the efforts of the young, just as the adults' mode of life and whole pattern of behaviour, the outward symptom of which is dignity, required the service that the children were able to provide. In individual cases this could result in misuse. I discovered that one lazy step-mother grossly misused and over-worked a 12 year old step-daughter. However, this was more due to ignorance as to what a child's strength could stand and how much sleep a growing child required than to ill-will. Life in Southern Kurdistan was hard for the adults also, child mortality dreadfully high. As in all communities at a medieval stage, only the best equipped survived. Medical assistance was rare, hygiene limited. The physical world in Southern Kurdistan was hard, but on the other hand the psychic climate was more clement than our's. Children were seldom treated angrily and I only experienced the hint of punishment. The children's participation in the activities of adults was apparently consonant with their natural impulses, and the company of grown-ups provided the children with so much entertainment and so many tasks that they prided themselves on performing, that conflict situations were confined to a minimum, and were not expressed in aggressions with subsequent punishment and the